

OUT & About



The Pacific Region
Outreach Newsletter

Theme: Volunteers

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Carlsbad Volunteers Do It All!

Ecological Services Office boasts strong volunteer program

By Jeanne Clark

Volunteerism is strong in the Pacific Region refuges. During 1998, 7,933 volunteers contributed 330,659 hours of labor, with a gross value of \$3,336,433 (or \$2,494,197 after program costs were subtracted).

Some of the region's successful volunteer efforts are showcased in this issue. Selecting one to feature was difficult; however the program put together by Shawnetta Grandberry, the energetic and capable volunteer coordinator for the Ecological Services (ES) program at the Carlsbad Fish and Wildlife Office, stands out for its number of volunteers, diversity of projects, and volume of work accomplished in an urban setting.

Grandberry's phone rang just twice, then I heard her cheerful "Shawn Grandberry, Volunteer Services..." I hadn't talked to Shawn since 1995, when I had been impressed by her quiet efficiency and the respect she received from the volunteers she provided to help with the



Photo by: USFWS

Shawnetta Grandberry heads the Carlsbad Office volunteer program.

National Watchable Wildlife Conference at Huntington Beach, California.

Many FWS employees associate volunteers with refuges and hatcheries. Not surprisingly, 83 refuges make use of volunteer programs, as do 14 hatcheries. Five ecological services offices also use volunteers, and Grandberry's program often leads the pack in terms of volunteer numbers and hours donated.

See CARLSBAD OFFICE... Page 4

O&A Announces Themes for Each Issue

Get your stories and station featured in an upcoming issue

As you thumb through the pages of this issue of *Out & About*, you'll notice that several articles are about volunteers.

To give your Pacific Region outreach newsletter a special focus, every issue of *Out & About* will have a theme — beginning with volunteers in this issue. To make it easy to identify articles that relate to theme, just look for the symbol pictured to the right: It will appear next to headlines that relate to the issue's theme.



We are pleased to announce that the themes for the next five issues are: Watchable Wildlife/Nature Tourism (Spring 99); Internet/Electronic Revo-

lution (Summer 99); Partnerships (Fall 99) Grantwriting/ Fundraising (Winter 00); Law Enforcement (Spring 00).

We invite you to submit articles about what you're doing — whether they relate to these themes or describe other outreach activities or accomplishments. If you have a story idea, contact the editor and we'll try to get your story covered.

To help you with planning, *Out & About's* deadlines and submission guidelines appear on the masthead, located on page 2. Do you have questions, ideas, or story leads? Contact *Out & About* Editor Jeanne Clark at 916/979-2085, or by email. **O**

Out & About is published quarterly for Region 1 Fish and Wildlife Service employees.

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SUBMISSIONS

We welcome your submissions to Out & About. Regular sections in the newsletter are:

Feature Articles
Case Studies
Outreach Accomplishments
Trainings & Workshops
Announcements
Q & A
Letters to the Editor
Outreach Resources

Articles should be submitted by e-mail or 3-1/2 inch floppy and run 150 to 500 words. Gear writing to newsletter style; avoid technical jargon. Photos welcome. Publication is not guaranteed, though every effort will be made to use submissions.

Submit articles to Jeanne Clark:
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SUBMISSION DEADLINES

Spring January 15
Summer May 15
Fall August 15
Winter November 15

Out & About has received U.S. Department of the Interior and Fish and Wildlife Service DI-550 approval.

It is the policy of the U.S. Department of the Interior to ensure that individuals are not denied employment opportunities or program delivery because of their race, color, age (40+), sex (gender), national origin, religion, physical or mental handicap. Unlawful discrimination in any form is strictly prohibited by agency policies and should be reported to the Fish and Wildlife Service Region 1 Equal Employment Opportunity Counselor, Office for Human Resources, 911 NE 11th Ave., Portland, OR 97232-4181.

FROM THE ASSISTANT REGIONAL DIRECTOR

Volunteers to the NWR System

Volunteers accomplish much vital refuge work

By Carolyn Bohan

What benefit do volunteers provide to the Service's work on national wildlife refuges? This is a question I was often asked over the last three years by Congressional staff in Washington, D.C. The answer? They are vital!! It is a simple answer, yet one that everyone constantly wants to hear.

In my previous position as the deputy assistant director of the refuges and wildlife program, I was actively involved in communicating what we do on refuges, and how we get it done. Of course there was an obligatory discussion of money that always goes along with the story. What most logical minds concluded was that there was no way out on the ground accomplishments could be achieved with the budgets we were receiving. The answer to our success lies in dedicated people, Service employees and volunteers working together and sharing common goals.

The message of the importance of volunteers to the refuge system was the genesis for the enactment of the "National Wildlife Refuge System Volunteer and Community Partnership Enhancement Act of 1998." One of the findings made by Congress in this act was "by encouraging volunteer programs and donations, and facilitating non-Federal partnerships with refuges, Federal funding for the refuges can be supplemented and the System can fully benefit from the amendments." Because of the many hours of hard work already dedicated to the refuge system by volunteers over the years, the Service now has legislation which may offer endless possibilities in regards to volunteers.

What have volunteers been doing in Region 1? A lot. We have been keeping track of volunteer data since 1989, when volunteer services totaled about 89,000 activity hours.

In 1998 by comparison, volunteers gave a total of 330,000 activity hours, with 286,000 of those hours occurring on refuges. In the Pacific Region, the concept of volunteering has caught on in a big way!

I have visited several refuges in the last six months and every station has a story to tell about volunteers. Here are a few:

Hawaiian and Pacific Islands Complex: Volunteers provided labor for propagation and outplanting of native trees, including endangered varieties. They assisted staff in leading birding hikes and answering questions from the public. They helped control noxious weeds and remove exotic grasses to clear a path for restoring critical habitat for many endangered birds.

Nisqually Complex: Volunteers staffed a refuge entrance from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. throughout the spring and summer. They played a crucial role in successfully implementing regulations and improving wildlife protection.

Ridgefield Complex: Volunteers played a vital role in migratory bird projects by providing over 75% of the labor for the studies.

Willapa NWR: Volunteers comprised a major work force for completing snowy plover nest surveys and doing hand and mechanical mowing operations for *Spartina* control. They helped locate boundaries and post signs on the refuge.

I have been exhilarated by these efforts and will continue to do all I can to support our volunteers. I truly believe the possibilities and benefits they offer to the national wildlife refuge system are endless.

Carolyn Bohan is the assistant regional director for refuges.



OUTREACH ACCOMPLISHMENTS

A Close Look at the New Volunteer Act

A talk with Mike Ielmini, FWS refuge volunteer coordinator

By Jeanne Clark

Many hard-working FWS employees and individuals from refuge support groups exchanged congratulations on October 5, 1998, the day that President Clinton signed important legislation — the National Wildlife Refuge System Volunteer and Community Partnership Enhancement Act.

For Mike Ielmini, who recently took the helm as the volunteer partnerships and friends' groups coordinator for refuges, the timing couldn't have been better. "Among its provisions the law establishes up to 20 pilot volunteer program sites," says Ielmini. "It emphasizes the importance of our refuges as outdoor classrooms for local schools and makes it easier for interested parties to donate money or services directly to refuges."

The new law also strengthens a refuge manager's ability to enter into cooperative agreements with local conservation groups to conduct refuge projects. In particular, it enhances the Service's relationship with hundreds of refuge support groups across the nation. Toward that end, Ielmini is working closely with the National Wildlife Refuge Association, National Audubon Society, and other groups to help implement the legislation in each region. Ielmini spoke with Out & About to explain how the law will work.

O&A: Does the law affect hatcheries, ecological services offices, or other programs who use volunteers?

Ielmini: The law specifically focuses on refuges and is linked directly to the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act. It has the potential to support other partnership efforts within the Service.

O&A: Does the law expand the use of partnerships on refuges?

Ielmini: Yes. The law directs the Service to expand use of public and private partners to achieve refuge goals. It encourages the use of cooperative agreements to promote local involvement with refuge projects. The law is linked to and complements the popular Friends' Program (now called the Refuge Support Group Program).

O&A: Can you explain how the law affects financial donations to refuges?

Ielmini: It allows individuals or organiza-

tions to contribute directly to a refuge and to earmark the contribution for a specific project or projects. It streamlines and facilitates the administrative and contracting procedures which sometime frustrate the partnership process.

O&A: The law directed Secretary Babbitt to establish up to 20 pilot volunteer program sites. Have sites been identified?

Ielmini: Yes. With regional agreement, 14 sites have been selected — two per region. To date, at least 10 full-time volunteer coordinators have been hired. The sites are: Desert NWR and Stone Lakes NWR (Region 1); Wichita Mountain NWR and Texas Chenier Plain Complex (Region 2); Neal Smith NWR and Upper Mississippi River Wildlife and Fish Refuge (Region 3); St. Marks NWR and Reelfoot Complex (Region 4); Forsythe NWR and Rhode Island Complex (Region 5); Rocky Mountain Arsenal NWR and Sand Lake NWR (Region 6); and Kenai NWR and Arctic NWR (Region 7).

O&A: Can you talk about the law and funding?

Ielmini: The law directs the Service to establish pilot sites, staff them with full-time volunteer coordinators, develop programs — and report back to Congress in three years. If Congress is then satisfied that the spirit of the Volunteer Act has been implemented, the law — as written — includes a future authorization of \$4 million per year in funding for refuge volunteer programs nationwide. These funds must still be appropriated by Congress, but the authorization for this funding has already been established.

For the three years of the pilot program, each region is funding the coordinator positions and associated costs.

You can get a copy of Public Law 105-242 on the Internet at <http://thomas.loc.gov> (Library of Congress website). Questions? Contact Region 1 volunteer coordinator, Ron Anglin, at 503/231-2077.

Jeanne Clark is public outreach coordinator at Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge and editor of Out & About.

"It allows individuals or groups to directly contribute to a refuge and to earmark the funds."

Upcoming Events

Wild on Wetlands

When: March 13-14
Where: Los Banos, CA
Contact: Los Banos Chamber of Commerce 209/826-5188 or 800/336-6354

National Wildlife Refuge System Birthday

When: March 14
Where: Nationwide
Regional Contact: Susan Saul 503/872-2728

Othello Sandhills Crane Festival

When: March 27-28
Where: Othello, WA
Contact: Othello Chamber of Commerce 800/684-2556

Where the Eagle Lands

When Information and Education Specialist Taylor Pittman from the Washington State Office heard about the plans to celebrate the Dungeness River watershed at a day festival near Sequim, she knew she had a great lead for a FWS exhibit: a real, 300-pound bald eagle's nest taken from a collapsing tree on Orcas Island, in North Puget Sound.

The problem was how to get this U.S. Forest Service exhibit from its home, 100 miles away, to the festival. Pam Sanguinetti, a Dungeness NWR bio-tech acting as volunteer coordinator, not only got her volunteers to



Dungeness NWR volunteer interprets eagle nest to school children.

Photo courtesy: USFWS

transport the nest, they also helped create an exhibit around the nest, and staff the booth throughout the festival.

Students Earn Credits

Last year, the Leavenworth NFH staff boosted manpower at the four-day Wenatchee River Salmon Festival by working with local high school teachers to allow students to volunteer for school credit.

A total of 160 kids took advantage of this chance to help out during school time — and to earn community service credits required for graduation. The kids were really motivated to work, and many of the seniors remembered coming to the eight-year old festival as grade-schoolers.

Help with Pledge Drive

Genelle Treaster, volunteer coordinator at Stone Lakes NWR, was attending a volunteer fair where she met the volunteer coordinator for KVIE, Sacramento's PBS television station.

Anyone who watches PBS knows that pledge drives involve pledge breaks, where banks of phones are staffed by members of volunteer organizations.

Without a moment's hesitation she volunteered refuge docents and staff to handle the phones one Saturday evening during

See **PLEDGE DRIVE...** Page 7

Carlsbad Office...

Continued from Page 1

How does she inspire this type of interest and fidelity? Her six-year old urban program isn't tied to a facility that offers education or public access opportunities — features that are cornerstones of refuge or hatchery volunteer programs. What do her volunteers do?

PROVIDE INTERESTING PROJECTS

Grandberry works hard to fit volunteer preferences and talents to the jobs at hand. "Our volunteers include college students or fish and wildlife professionals who have not landed a full-time job," she says, "and also retirees and working folks who want to do something meaningful in their free time."

When Grandberry's office mates need help, volunteers readily step forward. They've assisted with bird banding, construction of

nesting platforms, status and distribution surveys, and life history and depredation studies of several sensitive species, including the light-footed clapper rail, the San Clemente Island loggerhead shrike, Pacific pocket mouse, and Quino checkerspot butterfly. They also help with photography, habitat restoration, data entry and analysis, laboratory and clerical assistance, writing/editing scientific manuscripts, and public outreach.

"We would not have been able to keep our project on schedule if it had not been for their generous help," says Clark Winchell, a Carlsbad office fish and wildlife biologist involved with Pacific pocket mouse surveys. Those in the listing and recovery branch who are working on a groundbreaking data-

See **CARLSBAD OFFICE...** Page 12

THE MEDIA CORNER

The Interview

The foundation for your encounters with the news media

By Joan Jewett

The phone rings. The caller is a reporter who wants an interview. What should you do? Don't panic. Take a deep breath. Think before you talk.

Of all the challenges facing Service employees, one of the scariest can be giving a media interview. Many people suspect the worst of reporters. Maybe you've had your own bad experience with the media in the past. Or little or no experience at all.

Dealing with the media doesn't have to be a frightening experience. With preparation, members of the Service can turn interviews into one of their greatest tools for informing the public about the important work we do.

The following tips are intended to help you give effective interviews and hopefully, enjoy the process. Remember them whether you are doing an impromptu interview or one that has been scheduled. While these two types of interviews are very different, they both rely on the same basics for success: your ability to deliver your message and make your points in a credible way, whether or not the issue is controversial.

Also, remember to tailor your comments to the form of media that will be carrying your story. Interview statements made to television and radio reporters must be very brief and concise. (For additional tips, see Media Corner, *Working with Reporters*, in the Spring 1998 issue of *Out & About*.)

• **Clarify your message** — Write down the central points, then condense your message into one statement you can say in a single breath. Lack of a clear message leaves interpretation up to the reporter and exposes you to being misunderstood.

To train yourself for broadcast interviews try to say how you feel about a tough subject — and three reasons why — in 12 seconds or less. If the reporter has called you out of the blue, ask to call them back in 10 or 15 minutes, then use the time to collect your thoughts and review relevant materials.

• **Prepare good quotes in advance** — Use short statements, with active verbs, that speak directly to your message. They are less likely to get paraphrased or cut short, both of which

can lead to being misquoted. Practice them out loud before your interview.

• **Develop support materials** — Gather charts, graphs and reports that illustrate what you are saying. If you have scheduled an interview on a complicated topic, ask if you can send briefing materials in advance to help the reporter prepare. This may also help to guide the types of questions the reporter asks.

• **Ask questions** — Clarify the purpose of the interview; find out how and when it will be used and whether others will also be interviewed. Don't answer a question unless you fully understand it.

• **Talk on-the-record** — Assume that everything you say may be used in a story. Never ask that a statement be off-the-record after you've said it.

• **Don't be defensive** — Even if you feel the reporter is digging for dirt, be pleasant and professional. Nothing makes a reporter more suspicious — or aggressive — than someone who is defensive or hostile.

• **Don't be intimidated** — Remember, in most interview situations you are the expert on the topic, not the reporter.

Many good books are available on how to deal effectively with the media; some are listed in the box below. And the National Conservation Training Center offers excellent classes on the topic. Make use of these resources and you'll learn how to use the power of the press on your terms and to the Service's advantage. **O**

Joan Jewett is chief of the public affairs office.

Suggested Reading

Winning with the News Media, Clarence Jones/Video Consultants, 1999, 813/832-4137.

You are the Message, Roger Ailes, Currency Doubleday, 1995.

How to Get Your Point Across in 30 Seconds, or Less, Milo Frank, Simon & Schuster, 1986.

Media Circus, Howard Kurtz, Random House, 1993.



"Assume that everything you say may be used in a story."

More
Upcoming
Events

Aleutian
Goose Festival

When: March 26-28
Where:
Crescent City, CA
Contact: Rick Hiser
707/465-0888
www.calla@wave.net

John Scharff
Migratory Bird
Festival

When: April 9-11
Where: Burns, OR
Contact: Harney
County Chamber of
Commerce
541/573-2636
www.harneycounty.com

Godwit Days

When: April 17-19
Where: Arcata, CA
Contact: City of Arcata
707/822-5953

Walker Lake
Loon Festival

When: April 17
Where:
Walker Lake, NV
Contact: Great Basin
Bird Observatory
702/348-2644
www.gbbo.org

Volunteer Program Highlights

Three successful Pacific Region volunteer programs share some basics

By Jeanne Clark

The Pacific Region is fortunate to have several active and very successful volunteer programs. *Out & About* spoke with [Maria Vonderheid](#) at Kauai NWRC, [Corky Broaddus](#) at Leavenworth NFH, and [Kathleen Bennett](#) (for Kim Aichele) at Don Edwards San Francisco Bay NWR — where dedicated volunteers consistently donate high numbers of hours each year. Here are some tips about their programs:

O & A: When was a volunteer program initiated at your station?

Kauai: 1983
Leavenworth: 1988
SF Bay: 1981

O & A: Do you have a volunteer coordinator? What is their title and how much time do they spend on volunteer duties?

Kauai: Yes. Interpretive specialist/park ranger. About one-third time.
Leavenworth: Yes. Information and education specialist. About ten percent of time.
SF Bay: Yes. Visitor center director/volunteer coordinator. Full-time.

O & A: Your station has been successful at attracting volunteers. What is your secret for maintaining a dedicated volunteer force?

Kauai: Most volunteers are retired and donate three hours per week. College students are recruited as interns, work 40 hours a week, and are flown to islands from the west coast.
Leavenworth: We have an aggressive recruiting program and offer diverse projects that have high volunteer “buy in.” We have high visibility in and recognition by the community.
SF Bay: We recruit volunteers at clubs and other gatherings. We are on a mailing list of volunteer organizations. Volunteers apply and stay on because we routinely tie the work they do to direct benefits to the refuge. We sponsor special “volunteers only” trips to other refuges or natural attractions and highlight achievements in our volunteer newsletter.

O & A: What types of assistance do your volunteers provide?

The three stations listed these types of “traditional” activities: Visitor center staffing, special events, conservation fairs/festivals, on- and off-site interpretation, school field trips, help with student volunteers, teacher training,

tours, programs, administrative duties, surveys, censusing, monitoring, restoration, and maintenance duties (trail, painting, repairs, vehicles, litter).

O & A: Please mention any “unusual” activities or “non-traditional” forms of assistance.

Kauai: Plant nursery.
Leavenworth: Winter ski trail maintenance, summer theater, use county jail work crews.
SF Bay: Plant nursery and sales, photography, and an art gallery manager manages our own art gallery and handles special art related events.

O & A: What is your biggest challenge?

Kauai: Communicating new information to volunteers here for just three hours per week.
Leavenworth: Coordinating volunteer schedules. Balancing and providing adequate funding to maintain program.

SF Bay: Many want to do biological field work but have no skills; our staff seldom has time to train them for specific projects.

O & A: What special things do you do to recognize your volunteers?

Kauai: Volunteer banquet in November, with awards, catered meal, music, etc.
Leavenworth: Recognition ceremonies, non-monetary gifts from our non-profit support group, media coverage in local papers, school credit time for students.

SF Bay: Awards dinner with gifts, newsletter articles, volunteer pins, potlucks, and a free beverage section in the kitchen is maintained for them.

O & A: Do your volunteers wear any FWS clothing? What? Who pays for it?

Kauai: Yes. We provide a blue polo shirt with refuge and volunteer patches sewn onto the sleeve.

Leavenworth: Yes. We have a site-specific customized volunteer uniform, paid for by our non-profit volunteer support group.

SF Bay: Yes. Volunteers purchase uniform shirt. Refuge supplies pins, patches, and name tags for shirt.

Survey compiled by Jeanne Clark, public outreach coordinator at Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge and editor of Out & About.

Public Affairs Upgrades Computer Software

New database tracks news clips and journalists

By Phil Carroll

Computers. They’re everywhere nowadays, and they’re in everything: cars, ovens, wrist radios... you name it.

They’re also incredibly capable now. The first one I ever used was about the size of a Chevy Suburban. It had to be fed big stacks of punched cards to get its operating instructions. If you did everything exactly right, it would churn through your stack of cards, flash its lights, and in a few minutes, do some simple calculation you could have done in your head.

Welcome to 1999, old man.

Your Public Affairs Office has gone through several generations of more and more powerful computer hardware in order to keep up with the world of bits and bytes. We’ve now jumped into the realm of software technology in an effort to provide quicker and more effective service to those within the Service.

It started like this. Several months ago someone asked us for copies of all of our newspaper clippings for the last two months related to a certain topic. Well, we don’t file them that way. We also don’t have the time it would take to comb files to fill such a request. Our frustrating inability to provide this basic service to our internal customers started us shopping around.

The software program we selected is *PROffice* by Capitol Hill Software. It fits our needs —and we hope yours — like a glove. It includes two basic functions in one integrated program: a news media contact database and a news clip database.

Pledge Drive...

Continued from Page 4

December. At her request, the PBS station scheduled the docents during an evening of environmental programming.

She had no trouble finding 25 volunteers to help. They worked their 6 p.m. til midnight shift, had great fun, and supported another community organization, all while

proudly wearing refuge t-shirts and caps.

The thank you note Treaster received indicated that refuge volunteers took in \$42,850 in pledges. Not bad for six hours of fun that also yielded great PR for the refuge.

We start out with Capitol Hill’s national 89,000-entry database and add our own regional mailing list and media contact names. We make a foundation for the news clipping database with a batch from our files, then add clips daily by scanning them into the system.

We’ll have image files and text files of all of our news clips, and we’ll be able to search them by any of the text they contain or by entering specific data fields. How does this help you? We’ll be able to quickly print out reports when someone needs to know how the public perception of a critical issue has been evolving over time.

Also, each journalist will be linked to what they’ve written. If a reporter requests an interview with the regional director, we’ll quickly be able to tell her what that person has been writing about us lately.

There’s more. Each entry is linked to a contact log, as well as any fact sheets, Q&As, or news releases we have generated on a given issue.

Best of all, our outreach specialists and information and education folks in the field are a part of the system — using it, updating it, or pulling needed reports via the Internet. And the computer it runs on is about the size of the glove box in a Chevy Suburban.

Welcome to 1999, Public Affairs.

Phil Carroll is a public affairs specialist in Region 1’s Public Affairs Office.

“If a reporter requests an interview... we can see what the person has been writing about us lately.”



Stone Lakes NWR volunteers handle KVIE pledge night phones.

Photo by: Genelle Treaster/USFWS

Oil and Gas Show Exhibit a Big Hit

ES display goes boldly where no FWS exhibit had gone before

By Donna Hummel

It started with a simple “Look what I got!” Peter Cross, San Joaquin Valley endangered species branch chief, had received a prospectus about the 17th Annual Pacific Oil and Gas Show in Bakersfield, California, and asked me about participating as an exhibitor. It was clear from the prospectus that this was a “kick the tire” type of trade show; no agencies were on the list of prior exhibitors.

Before making a decision, I touched bases with folks within the industry who assured that we would be welcomed and the show would offer a great opportunity to interact with industry representatives.

We knew our regular roaming exhibits wouldn’t work with this audience, so we designed one for this event. We used GIS to map

out the local oil fields and then superimposed the major conservation efforts occurring on those lands including HCPs, mitigation banks, and more.

We gathered several taxidermied specimens of listed species common to the oil fields; these became the “hooks” which brought people to our booth. This allowed us to discuss how the species were doing, and to reconfirm that the ESA had not shut down the industry.

We had been forewarned that we would likely receive some less-than-friendly comments and questions about our regulatory authority to protect wildlife species. We tried to field these comments with a smile and an occasional friendly barb to encourage our critics to hear us out. Even when folks

snickered while asking “What are you doing here? You’re the enemy,” they gave us an opportunity to provide information or clarify misunderstandings.

The Sacramento Fish and Wildlife Office has exhibited at many environmentally “friendly” gatherings, such as professional conferences, career fairs, travel shows, and similar events. This show stretched our normal “comfort zone” a bit and required some extra attention be given to our exhibit design and staffing; however, our success proved it was clearly worth the risk to “Go boldly where no FWS exhibit or staff has gone before!” **O**

Donna Hummel is an information and education specialist in the Sacramento Fish and Wildlife Office.



It's for the Birds

Looking for bird-related clip art, wallpaper, check lists, identification tips, links to bird sounds, and more? Log on to <http://birding.miningco.com> for some great birding education resources.

National Library for the Environment Website

Check out this Internet site with useful information on hot issues, environmental education programs and resources, environmental laws, ecology and biodiversity, conferences and meetings, and more. Log on to <http://www.cnie.org>

Cats Indoors Campaign

The American Bird Conservancy (ABA) developed a Cats Indoors! education kit including an array of materials that can be used to educate people about the affects cats on hundreds of millions of birds and other wildlife. More than 1,700 kits have already been distributed. The ABA has followed up with a new brochure and poster, Keeping Cats Indoors Isn't Just For The Birds! (single samples are free), as well as free public service announcements. For information, call 202/778-9666, or log on to abc@abcbirds.org

ESA's 25th Birthday Bash

The grizzly seemed to gape in astonishment as Raven and Salmon spoke and danced, schoolchildren's puppets told stories of changing times and landscapes, and scores of activists, bureaucrats and businessmen shook, rattled and roared their approval. Colorful banners waved overhead and a life-sized paper-maché tiger stalked the entrance hall.

It was not your typical government get-together, according to Doug Zimmer, information and education specialist in the Western Washington Fish and Wildlife Office.

Over 200 people attended the November 1998 event, where they watched a grade school class present a puppet show on the loss of wildlife habitat, heard a theater troupe evoke the spirits of Raven and Salmon to describe the plight of birds and fish, and celebrated the presentation of awards to agency, industry and activists working with the ESA.

Leavenworth NFH Wins Award Again!

For the second year in a row, the American Fisheries Society recognized Leavenworth National Fish Hatchery's education program. In 1997 the program received the western section's Conservation Award. In 1998 the program and hatchery received national recognition with the prestigious Carl R. Sullivan

Fishery Conservation Award. The hatchery is in good company: Previous Sullivan award winners include Senator John Breaux of Louisiana and the American Sport Fishing Institute.

The society recognized the hatchery's education effort, headed by Information and Education Specialist Corky Broaddus, for its vision and eight-year track record of offering exceptional outreach programs to school children, troubled youth, educators, and the public.

Check Out This TEA Party

Does your station need funds for acquisition of scenic or historic sites, landscaping, visitor facilities, and other on-site improvements? If your projects are within the viewshed of a state highway you may qualify for funds from the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA 21).

Each state will determine how TEA funds shall be administered. In most cases grants can be submitted separately to state and regional transportation agencies. Contact your state transportation agency for grant materials. You may also direct questions to Dick Kuehner, EPIC, (503/872-2700) and Mari Jilbert, EPIC (503/872-2707), who are already working with many stations on grant submissions.

Refuge PSAs Coming

Watch the mail for a pack of camera-ready public service announcements to be used to promote refuge activi-

ties. The mailing includes five packages — one on hunting, fishing, photography, education and interpretation, and photography.

The PSAs are a perfect complement to events and activities at your site, such as the refuge system anniversary, National Fishing Week, photo safaris, etc. Send them to local newspapers, weekly magazines, newsletters (Audubon, Sierra Club, fishing organizations, etc.), and use them in your own publications; two sizes are provided to encourage their use.



Eat Your Favorite Refuge?

Don't forget that March 14 is a ready-made outreach opportunity — the 96th anniversary of the National Wildlife Refuge System. FWS employees in Portland on March 12 can get in on a fun contest by baking and bringing in a cake representing any national wildlife refuge. A panel of judges will select and provide awards to the winners; employees will also vote for a favorite, which will receive the Peoples' Choice award. Following the judging, beverages will be offered and the entries will be consumed and enjoyed!

Looking for some gifts or to raise some funds? Consider purchasing t-shirts imprinted with the 1998 Refuge Week System poster art from the Friends of Blackwater. The \$17.95 price includes shipping and handling. For information, email at R5RW_BWNWR@mail.fws.gov

Training Your Volunteers

Friends' group helps new refuge initiate a training program

By Genelle Treaster

Volunteers are essential to the success of many FWS programs and events in the Pacific Region. They are especially important at a new station where staffing and facilities are limited, projects are numerous, and interest in public use is increasing daily.

This was exactly the challenge faced by Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge, established in 1994 in Sacramento County. Although they needed help with surveys, tours, restoration projects, and other activities, refuge staff had little time to recruit and train volunteers.

This challenge was tackled by a volunteer group itself — the Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge Association — a non-profit support group established shortly after the refuge was designated. Working with refuge staff, association members enlisted many partners and supporters to develop an annual training program at almost no cost.

FIND RECRUITS, DEVELOP TRAINING PROGRAM AND MATERIALS

In order to recruit volunteers, the refuge sends a news release describing the volunteer program and training experience to local and regional newspapers about one month prior to the start of the program. The news releases alone generate plenty of interest; volunteers are also solicited through refuge and association publications. Some communities have volunteer service agencies that can assist with recruitment.

Potential volunteers complete an application in order to attend the docent training program, which consists of a three-hour session held once a week for six weeks. We meet on a weekday evening from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. in late spring. Half of the sessions are held in a conference room provided by a refuge partner; the other half are field studies on the refuge.

LOCATE EXPERTS, PROVIDE MATERIALS

Each session covers two subjects, such as Pacific Flyway habitats and interpretation strategies. Experts from the refuge, local agencies, colleges, and private organizations instruct each subject; they must be lively, engaging speakers.

Everyone attending the program wears a name badge and refreshments are always offered.

To complement the wealth of oral, visual, and written information provided by instructors, we developed a three-ring binder with handouts that range from

FWS publications to local natural history. Material printing and binders are the only significant costs of the entire program.

MAINTAIN CONTACT, GIVE RECOGNITION

In addition to the training program, every other month we hold an on-site "Volunteer Day," which includes presentations by refuge staff or guest speakers and some sort of activity. Volunteers' families are welcome. Although information sharing and volunteer recognition (pins, hats, key chains, certificates, etc.) are the primary focuses, volunteer bonding always results. Additional information and acknowledgments are provided in a quarterly volunteer newsletter.

Initiated in 1997, the docent training program has now been offered twice. Each time, it attracted about 25 people, of all ages and from all walks of life. We currently have 45 active docents, with a 90 percent volunteer retention rate. We know our new program is doing what it was intended to accomplish: In the year following our first training, volunteer hours tripled over the preceding year, reflecting their presence in many facets of refuge operations. They've served so many hours, we are now ready to establish an annual volunteer awards dinner.

Genelle Treaster is an outdoor recreation planner at Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge.



More Upcoming Events

Earth Day

When: April 22

Where: Nationwide

Grays Harbor Shorebird Festival

When: April 30-May 2

Where: Hoquiam, WA

Contact:

Sheila McCartan

360/753-9467

dschwick@techline.com

Kern Valley Bioregions Festival

When: April 23-25

Where: Weldon, CA

Contact:

Festival coordinator

800/350-7393

krpfriends@

lightspeed.net

ENTIRELY
EPIC

Staying at the Cutting Edge

Better equipment and software boosts EPIC's productivity

By Vaughn Ruppert

In an era when computer capacities and technology seem to change at a rapid rate, it's a challenge to stay on the cutting edge. During the past year-and-a-half, your EPIC staff has worked to upgrade and update hardware and software in order to provide you with quality products and help speed up the production process.

We remain dedicated MacIntosh users because this system is still the standard in the printing industry, allowing us to produce the high-end graphic work associated with your projects. Working on a Mac is not normally an obstacle when you transfer electronic files to us; our Macs readily convert WordPerfect and other documents for formatting and design in Pagemaker.

Our equipment cache now includes two new color ink jet printers, one small format (documents up to 17 x 22 inches) and one large format (documents up to 42 inches wide, any length). You should see a considerable improvement in the quality of proofs and mockups you receive, which should greatly assist with your decision-making and the proofing process.

We're really excited about the products our large format printer can produce. Interpretive panel art and signs can be viewed at their full size to get their visual effect prior to

actual production. In some cases our large format printer could even be used to create temporary panels or signage to fill the gap between the design stage and completion of the full-scale project.

With the new graphic standards for FWS Service publications in place, we will continue to switch outdated leaflets and other publications from the traditional layout and paste-up format to digital output. Desired changes, whether small or large, can then be digitally incorporated with greater efficiency. This conversion will equate to direct benefits to your station or office, allowing us to routinely update your publications with much less effort.

EPIC has a long list of requested projects, which now includes a deluge of recently submitted TEA-21 Refuge Roads proposals. Normally, we are only able to take on a small percentage of these jobs each year, so boosting productivity through better technology is not only important; it's essential. In practical terms, we hope that our enhanced electronic capabilities will produce a lot of happy campers who see better graphic products, a quicker turnaround, and more completed priority projects.

Vaughn Ruppert is a visual information specialist at EPIC.

TRAININGS & WORKSHOPS

Congress and the Field Office

Improve communications with Congressional district offices. Identify contacts, design an outreach plan and help staff members address constituent needs.

Where: Atlanta, GA

When: April 22-23, 1999 (call for space availability)

Contact: Garry Tucker (NCTC) 304/876-7498
Ora Dixon (NCTC) 304/876-7314

Environmental Education Methods

Find out how to add simple evaluation mechanisms to measure program effectiveness. Gain a toolbox of skills for working with teachers, students, and others.

Where: Shepherdstown, WV

When: April 13-16

Contact: Georgia Jeppesen (NCTC) 304/876-7388

Communities Working for Wetlands

Whether you're interested in environmental education or strategies for working with landowners, agencies, or others, these interactive sessions are jam-packed with great information.

Where: San Francisco, CA

When: April 14-17

Contact: Terrene Institute 800-726-4853

Education Programs for Youth: After School, Weekends, and Summers

Learn how to develop study programs for youth in non-formal settings. Plan a unit for an outdoor education program. Offered in partnership with NWF's Nature Quest program.

Where: Prairie Wetlands Center,
Fergus Falls, MN

When: June 8-10

Contact: Gary Stolz (NCTC) 304/876-7654

Carlsbad Office...

Continued from Page 4

*"I like to limit
the orientation
to no more
than 18 people
so it feels
personal."*



Printed on recycled paper

base that tracks data for all of southern California's federally listed species would agree: Volunteers tallied more than 400 hours helping to complete entry of the first two databases on schedule.

Together these projects have allowed the Carlsbad ES volunteers to rack up some impressive statistics: During 1997 and 1998 they contributed more than 17,600 hours, making a net dollar value contribution of nearly \$185,000.

RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING

Offering exciting and diverse projects is a vital part of recruitment success. "We showcase volunteer opportunities at environmental and career fairs," says Grandberry, "and recruit college students, arranging internships for some in exchange for college credits." Newsletter articles, brochures, information at special events, and local volunteer agencies also cultivate interest in volunteering.

Potential volunteers receive an application package. Those who Grandberry selects attend three-hour orientation that features Service activities, the volunteer program, and ES staff presentations.

"I like to limit the orientation to no more than 18 people so it feels personal," comments Grandberry.

"If someone can't attend, I'll set up an informal meeting to accommodate his or her schedule." Grandberry doesn't have time to train each volunteer, so she uses her skilled veterans to supervise new recruits.

Volunteers also receive *Wild Times*, a monthly volunteer newsletter that includes programs of interest, endangered species profiles, spotlights on volunteers, birthday

wishes, announcements, an events calendar, and more.

EVALUATE!

"I developed *Wild Times* in order to show our appreciation and expand understanding of Service programs," explains Grandberry. Since she only works on volunteer programs about 15 hours per week, she relies on the newsletter to maintain contact with her 185 volunteers.

Following the principles of good customer service, she readily returns phone calls, leaves voice mail messages with compliments, and encourages office mates to recognize special volunteer efforts. As the budget allows, Grandberry also provides t-shirts, hats, pins, coffee mugs, and other forms of recognition.

To evaluate these efforts, she mails a survey to volunteers after six months of service, asking for their assessment of everything from the volunteer orientation program to accessibility of FWS personnel.

Her program has found solid support among some of the ES staff; however, like volunteer coordinators at other FWS stations and offices, some of her coworkers are overburdened and feel they don't have time to train and utilize volunteers. Likewise, she routinely touches bases with ES staff to see how volunteers are performing — and to encourage their use.

At this she has been successful. Grandberry's volunteers consistently tally enough hours to rank among Region 1's top ten refuges, hatcheries, and ES offices, which include: Don Edwards San Francisco Bay Complex, Nisqually Complex, Leavenworth NFH, Kilauea Point NWR, Malheur NWR, Sacramento Complex, Honolulu ES Office, Sweetwater Marsh NWR, and Pacific Remote Islands Complex.

But even the region's smallest volunteer programs add to the huge value provided to the Service. In an era when the bottom line counts, Pacific Region volunteers provided a net value of \$2,494,197 during 1998.

In day-to-day terms, these contributions equate to real on-the-ground work that helps get the job done.

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Jeanne Clark is public outreach coordinator at Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge and editor of Out & About.

Photo by Shawnetta Grandberry



Volunteer Betty Roberts helps cook at the Southern California Eco-Region Strategy Meeting.